

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 2699

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GW, MX

SUBJECT: VISIT OF WILLY BRANDT TO MEXICO

1. FORMER FRG CHANCELLOR WILLY BRANDT VISITED MEXICO MARCH 20-24. HIS VISIT OVERLAPPED THAT OF VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT CARLOS ANDRES PEREZ AND HE WAS BUT ONE OF A NUMBER OF ILLUSTRIOUS PERSONAGES WHO HAVE RECENTLY VISITED MEXICO (E.G. QUEEN ELIZABETH II) OR WHO ARE SCHEDULED TO VISIT (E.G. THE SHAH OF IRAN) . DESPITE THE OVERLAP WITH PEREZ, PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA AND THE GOM RECEIVED BRANDT WITH WARM HOSPITALITY. ECHEVERRIA BROKE PROTOCOL BY MEETING BRANDT AT THE AIRPORT, HELD PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS WITH HIM, INCLUDED BRANDT ALONG WITH PEREZ IN CEREMONIES HONORING THE VISITORS, AND HOSTED A LUNCH IN BRANDT'S HONOR ON MARCH 24. (INVITED TO THE LUNCH WERE HEADS OF THE PRI -- DOMINANT, PRO-GOVERNMENT PARTY -- AND THE MINUSCULE PARTIES SUBSTANTIALLY CONTROLLED BY THE PRI, BUT NOT THE INDEPENDENT OPPOSITION PARTY, PAN.)

2. MEXICAN OFFICIALS ATTEMPTED -- AS WITH ALL VISITORS INCLUDING QUEEN ELIZABETH) -- TO WIN SUPPORT FOR THE ECHEVERRIA BRAINCHILD, THE CHARTER OF ECONOMIC RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF STATES (CERDS). THE ATTEMPT WAS NOT NOTABLY SUCCESSFUL. BRANDT EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE "GUIDING PRINCIPLES" OF CERDS BUT MADE CLEAR HIS VIEW THAT THE CHARTER REQUIRED "ADJUSTMENTS" TO MEET THE LEGITIMATE
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NEEDS OF THE INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES. AN FRG OFFICIAL

TOLD EMBOFF THAT IN PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS WITH ECHEVERRIA, BRANDT RESISTED PRESSURES RE CERDS AND EXPRESSED SOME SKEPTICISM ABOUT CHARTERS IN GENERAL, NOTING THAT VARIOUS WIDELY-ACCLAIMED CHARTERS (INCLUDING THAT OF THE UN) HAD NOT BROUGHT CIVIL LIBERTY TO THE PEOPLE OF EAST GERMANY NOR REUNIFICATION TO THE TWO GERMANIES. SIMILARLY, IN PUBLIC COMMENTS BRANDT SPOKE OF A NEED TO GET IDEAS OFF PAPER AND INTO PRACTICAL CHANNELS OF IMPLEMENTATION. DESPITE BRANDT'S CAUTION ABOUT THE CHARTER, GOVERNMENT-ORIENTED NACIONAL IN TYPICAL FASHION AND OUT OF CONTEXT HEADLINED THAT "THE CHARTER SHOULD CONTROL TTRAN-NATIONAL COMPANIES, SAID WILLY BRANDT." SIMILARLY, HEADLINES PLAYED UP A BRANDT REMARK THAT "HUNGER LEADS TOWARD WAR" (A FAVORITE IDEA OF ECHEVERRIA'S) .

3. IN AN ADDRESS AT THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE RPI, BRANDT SPOKE OF THE EXPERIENCE OF HIS OWN PDS PARTY. AMONG OTHER THINGS, HE SAID: "WE CATEGORICALLY REJECT THE SO-CALLED DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT, BECAUSE IT SUBSTITUTES ONE LACK OF LIBERTY FOR ANOTHER, ONE INJUSTICE FOR ANOTHER." SOCIALISM HE DESCRIBED AS "DEMOCRACY CARRIED TO LAST STAGE" "BUT NOT, HE ADDED, "A SUBSTITUTE FOR RELIGION."

4. BRANDT'S PRESTIGE AND PERSONALITY ATTRACTED AN UNUSUAL TURN-OUT AT RECEPTIONS IN HIS HONOR. GOM AND PRI PARTY OFFICIALS NOT USUALLY SEEN IN DIPLOMATIC CIRCLES NOT ONLY ATTENDED THE FRG CHARGE'S RECEPTION BUT EVEN ARRIVED ON TIME. IN SOME PUBLIC STATEMENTS BRANDT SPOKE SPANISH ("WITH DIFFICULTY" ONE PAPER NOTED). A FISHING TRIP TO PUERTO VALLARTA WAS NOT TOO PRODUCTIVE, THANKS TO THE MEXICANS' THOUGHTFULNESS IN SENDING ALONG A MARIACHI BAND TO ENTERTAIN HERR BRANDT WHILE HE FISHED.

5. COMMENT: PROBABLY TO NOBODY'S SURPRISE, NO MAJOR RESULTS WERE ACHIEVED BY THIS VISIT. PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA'S SATISFACTION IN CHALKING UP ONE MORE VIP WAS LIKELY BALANCED BY BRANDT'S FIRM STAND ON CERDS AND HIS STRONG REPUDIATION OF COMMUNISM. (ON THE LATTER, ECHEVERRIA PROBABLY AGREES BUT IS ALWAYS NERVOUS ABOUT SPOOKING

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THE MEXICAN LEFT.) BRANDT CAUGHT NO FISH, BUT OTHERWISE ALL PARTIES SEEM GENERALLY SATISFIED WITH THE VISIT.
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